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Senator Phil Pavlov
Chair, Senate Education Committee
905 Farnum Building
Lansing, MI 48909-7536

Re: Support for Senate Bill 817

Dear Senator Pavlov and Members of the Education Committee:

I am writing in support of the provision in SB 817 that would delay implementation of the teacher and administrator performance evaluation system until the 2015-16 school year.

While I embrace accountability for school employees and all public servants, it's imperative that any selected accountability metrics be fair, accurate and reliable; such is particularly true when developing a comprehensive, high-stakes teacher performance evaluation system. While I personally doubt whether a precision instrument for measuring a teacher's value-add to student growth and performance can be created as envisioned, the fact remains that as of this writing, no student growth assessment tool has been provided to facilitate compliance with section 380.1249 of the Revised School Code.

Recent changes in law related to tenure, seniority and subjects of bargaining, when combined with evaluation practices from the Michigan Council on Educator Effectiveness, have already provided significant tools that can improve teacher quality and student learning. Adding a standardized student growth metric to account for 25 - 50 percent of a teacher's overall rating is not the method I would recommend for further enhancing student outcomes. However, if such a tool is to be mandated and assigned such significant weighting, it is imperative to take the time necessary to select and correctly administer the best tool possible.

Senator Pappageorge has responsively engaged in dialogue with the educational community in his district relative to our concerns, resulting in his co-sponsorship of SB 817. I urge pushing the 'pause' button long enough to select an appropriate tool for measuring student growth.

Thank you for your sincere service and thoughtful consideration of my position.

Sincerely,

Rob Glass, Superintendent, Bloomfield Hills Schools